

# INDIGENOUS - ASIA PACIFIC BUSINESS RELATIONS ROUNDTABLE

## Summary Report

February 13, 2019

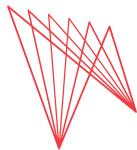
Offices of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada  
*Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Territory*  
Vancouver, British Columbia



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Together, strategic communications firm Creative Fire and the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada convened a roundtable on how to accelerate Indigenous business relations with Asia Pacific markets.

This first-ever meeting between Indigenous business leaders and Asia Pacific stakeholders was a first step in establishing strong nation-to-nation trade, marketing, and investment relationships between Indigenous Canada and Asia Pacific countries. This report provides a detailed overview of the roundtable and discussion outcomes.

The roundtable concluded with a consensus around the need to reconvene, perhaps in conjunction with the World Indigenous Business Forum in Vancouver, October 2019.

The Canadian Trade Commissioner Service is looking to coordinate Indigenous B2B meetings as part of the event.

# OPPORTUNITY

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Asia's economic rise is one of the most defining shifts of the 21st century. At the same time, Canada's First Nations are emerging as important economic drivers and partners in the nation's economy.

The roundtable was designed to assist Indigenous and Asian businesses in better responding to this opportunity by sharing critical information on the opportunities and challenges for Indigenous business and trade with Asia. It focused on how to accelerate Indigenous business engagement with the Asia Pacific and address questions including:

- *How can Asia-interested Indigenous businesses and economic development corporations grow their presence in Asia?*
- *What are the main obstacles and opportunities?*
- *Where are the opportunities for potential Asian investment, business, or trade?*
- *How can the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada and others best support Indigenous businesses in these efforts?*

# CONVENERS

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## **Sean Willy, CEO, Des Nedhe Group**



Drawing on his experience as an industry executive and with his roots in the Denesuline and Métis communities, Sean is a bridge builder between Indigenous and mainstream businesses across Canada. Within the uranium industry, he is credited with signing five community-based agreements in Australia and northern Saskatchewan and launching a unique community legacy fund, the Six River Trust. Since joining Des Nedhe in 2017, he has strengthened the company's network, partnerships and standing across Canada, negotiating new ventures and driving growth through collaboration with leading Indigenous entities, major Canadian companies, and governments at all levels. Formerly, Sean served as co-chair of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, and is currently chair of Northern Career Quest and director of the Global Indigenous Trust.

## **Stewart Beck, President & CEO, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada**



Prior to joining APF Canada, Mr. Stewart Beck served as the Canadian High Commissioner to the Republic of India with concurrent accreditation to the Kingdom of Bhutan and to Nepal. He joined Canada's Department of External Affairs and International Trade (now Global Affairs Canada) in 1982 and served abroad in the United States, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China. In Ottawa, Stewart held a number of progressively more senior positions, including Director General of the North Asia Bureau, Director General Responsible for Senior Management and Rotational Assignments, and Assistant Deputy Minister for International Business Development, Investment, and Innovation. He was Consul General in Shanghai and prior to his posting to India, he was Consul General in San Francisco.

# MODERATORS

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## Bonnie Leask and Jason Aebig, Creative Fire



Creative Fire is an award-winning communications and strategy firm and member of the Des Nedhe Group of companies, one of Canada's leading Indigenous economic development corporations owned by English River First Nation in Northern Saskatchewan. Learn more at [creative-fire.com](http://creative-fire.com).

# AGENDA

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8:30 – 9:00	<b>Registration</b>
9:00 – 9:30	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>
9:30 – 12:30	<b>Indigenous Investment and Marketing Opportunities</b> To establish strong nation-to-nation trade, marketing, and investment relationships between Indigenous Canada and Asia Pacific countries, it's important to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Where are the opportunities for potential Asian investment, business, or trade?</i></li><li>• <i>How can the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada and others best support Indigenous businesses in these efforts?</i></li></ul> Indigenous business leaders provided an overview of their business and economic development activities and any initiatives, products, or services that might be suitable for Asia Pacific markets or investment.
LUNCH	
1:15 – 3:45	<b>Asia Pacific Market Opportunities and Challenges</b> Indigenous businesses and economic development corporations have begun to make inroads into markets in the Asia Pacific region in recent years, however, the opportunities in the region have only begun to be tapped: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>How can Asia-interested Indigenous entities grow their presence in Asia?</i></li><li>• <i>How can Indigenous companies connect to global supply chains to take advantage of growth in Asia?</i></li><li>• <i>What can we learn from established best practices?</i></li><li>• <i>What are the main opportunities and challenges for engaging the Asia Pacific region?</i></li></ul> APF Canada, trade, and export development experts provided their thoughts and insights.
3:45 – 4:15	<b>The Role of Diplomatic Offices</b> Diplomatic offices play an essential role in facilitating trade and friendship between Canada and Asia Pacific countries. Representatives of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Vancouver provided insight into their role as facilitators of trade and in accessing other markets in Asia.
4:15 – 5:30	<b>Takeaways and Next Steps</b> Roundtable discussion on learnings and next steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Key takeaways from today?</i></li><li>• <i>Key challenges for Indigenous entities seeking to ignite interest and investment from Asia markets/investors?</i></li><li>• <i>Thoughts on next steps and how to address these challenges?</i></li></ul>
5:30	<b>Concluding Remarks</b>

# PRESENTATIONS

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Presentations were provided by leaders of Indigenous economic development organizations on the following:

- *The Taza Developments* - **Darrell Crowchild**, Tsuut'ina
- *The SRDL Business Group* - **Tom Many Heads**, SRDL Business Group
- *Musqueam Capital Corporation* - **Stephen Lee**, Musqueam Capital Corporation
- *Nunatsiavut Group of Companies* - **Clint Davis**, Acasta Capital
- *Cold Lake Priorities and Opportunities* - **Heather Bishop**, Cold Lake First Nation
- *Des Nedhe Development Overview* - **Sean Willy**, Des Nedhe Development
- *Lessons Learned* - **Matthew Coon Come**, Grand Council of the Crees

Presentations were provided by trade and business relations experts, including:

- **Stewart Beck**, President and CEO, *Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada*
- **Christian Hansen**, Senior Trade Commissioner, *Canadian Trade Commissioner Service*
- **Rosi Niedermayer**, Trade Commissioner, *Canadian Trade Commissioner Service*
- **Bryan Hughes**, *Export Development Canada*
- **Xenia Wong**, *Bennett Jones*
- **Andy Chen**, Director General, *Taipei Economic and Culture Office Vancouver*
- **Ruth Chang**, *Taiwan External Trade Council*

# 10 TAKEAWAYS

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**1.** Retail, residential, and light industrial land development are key economic drivers for Indigenous Nations, representing high priorities for potential investment.

- Represents largest/primary investible asset and lowest-hanging fruit
- Mostly greenfield opportunities, some adjacent or close to brownfield and existing commercial developments
- Renewable energy investments are high-potential since northern First Nations and Inuit have land bases to support renewable production and feed into North American grids

**2.** Indigenous Nations offer an “ease of doing business” that conventional municipal governments cannot.

- Nations are self-governing with jurisdictional control over development within their territories
- Regulatory environment is more simple and straightforward
- Access to key decision-makers
- The time required to approve and scale infrastructure and capital projects is more efficient
- Greater access to water/aquifer sources for heavier industrial applications

**3.** Indigenous Nations with independently-governed economic development corporations might be considered more attractive as partners since there is less business risk associated with potential turnover in political leadership.

- Musqueam and Des Nedhe have independent corporate boards governed by Business Charters

# 10 TAKEAWAYS, CONTINUED

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**4.** Potential for investment in technology manufacturing on urban First Nations lands is strong, especially in cases where First Nations are located in close proximity to vocational and technology training programs to support labour force development/supply.

- Recent example is Fujitsu, which is looking at Vancouver as it would have access to artificial intelligence (AI) resources and skilled labour pool

**5.** Indigenous Nations involved in natural resources development and extraction have high potential for Asia Pacific investment.

- These resource-based economies need capital to develop
- Resource-based products like freshwater fish could find immediate investment and consumer interest from the Asia Pacific region

**6.** APF Canada is well-positioned to provide ongoing assistance to Indigenous Nations in developing and refining investment opportunities targeted at Asia Pacific governments, customers, investors, and markets.

- Can help frame thinking and strategy on how to succeed in Asia
- Assistance in mobilizing Canadian linkages and government resources
- Resources and diplomatic/professional relationships that can accelerate business relations across the region

**7.** Indigenous co-operation across First Nations, Inuit, and Metis will be required to project a bigger brand image and supply strength to Asia Pacific governments, consumers, and markets.

- Unified brand as vehicle to sell, authenticate, deliver - “a \$X million cooperative that provides X products”
- In Asia, Canadian food products are considered high-quality, particularly if verified under a quality standard
- Capacity to service demand in Asia Pacific region/expanding markets is important
- Concept of an Indigenous economic co-operative - presenting and flying as a brand - would be vehicle to really engage Asia Pacific markets (investors, customers, consumers)
- Generally preferred to work with larger organizations - less risk, strong presence, greater confidence, significant combined assets, consolidated touch-point for negotiation and conflict resolution
- Trade associations like the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies or newly-formed Nia'Kinde Indigenous Business Consortium are working examples that could be used as launchpads for the development of such an entity to facilitate Asia Pacific trade
- If there are challenges to collaboration, start with a simple, neutral agreement between selected First Nations with the objective of “selling X into X country” and then invite others to participate
- To form an alliance, resources (and therefore financial commitments) would be required with the price to participate increasing as the alliance grows

## 10 TAKEAWAYS, CONTINUED

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**8.** The Canadian Trade Commissioner Service (TCS) office, World Chambers Network, Diplomatic Offices and the APF Canada are sources of Asia Pacific market intelligence and can facilitate relationship-building and marketing in specific countries.

- International trade diversification and supporting under-represented groups like Indigenous businesses are priorities of current federal government
- To leverage and complement this service, Indigenous Nations would benefit from “boots on the ground” sales and marketing support
- CanExport Program covers some costs associated with visiting a market to generate business
- Invest in Canada Program covers some costs associated with promotional materials and other associated expenses
- Many businesses competing for TCS attention and support - the better defined the opportunity, the better the support and advice

## 10 TAKEAWAYS, CONTINUED

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**9.** There is immediate interest by the Taiwanese to explore business relations with First Nations in Canada.

- Taiwan is a welcoming market where business is done in English and legal structures are similar to North America
- Large-scale exhibitions are the primary business relationship-building tool
- Canadian Pavilion is a popular destination for regional customers and buyers - demand for Indigenous products and services would be strong
- Director General extended an invitation for delegation of Indigenous business leaders to participate in a (funded) trade mission to Taiwan, which APF Canada agreed to assist in coordinating

**10.** E-commerce platforms should be included as part of any Asia Pacific business strategy.

- APF Canada collaborated with a Canadian company that now sells through JD.com and Alibaba.com
- Fresh-water fish, specialized cuts of wild meat products are suited to this approach
- E-commerce platforms are popular ways to do business, even on large volume sales
- Payment is a critical issue to consider
- Decide on a strategic approach to a specific market (Hong Kong or Taiwan) and then scale to others (China) based on success
- APF Canada has prepared white papers on e-commerce approaches that Indigenous corporations should reference

## Strategies

In 2011, APF Canada worked with BC First Nations Energy and Mining Council to produce a China engagement strategy and worked with it again in 2014 on a Japan engagement strategy. These are examples of what the Foundation could develop in partnership with Indigenous Nations across Canada.

*China*

[https://www.asiapacific.ca/sites/default/files/filefield/chinastrategy\\_final.pdf](https://www.asiapacific.ca/sites/default/files/filefield/chinastrategy_final.pdf)

*Japan*

[www.cccj.or.jp/sites/default/files/events/files/towards\\_a\\_first\\_nations-japan\\_strategy\\_page.pdf](http://www.cccj.or.jp/sites/default/files/events/files/towards_a_first_nations-japan_strategy_page.pdf)

## Research

APF Canada has prepared research papers that speak to nation-to-nation opportunities for commerce and investment.

*Pacific Partnerships: Connecting Indigenous People in Canada to Opportunities in Asia*

<https://www.asiapacific.ca/blog/pacific-partnerships-connecting-indigenous-people-canada>

*Seizing International Opportunities: British Columbia's First Nations Enhance Ties with China*

[https://www.asiapacific.ca/sites/default/files/filefield/canada\\_asia\\_agenda\\_21\\_final2.pdf](https://www.asiapacific.ca/sites/default/files/filefield/canada_asia_agenda_21_final2.pdf)

## Guides

The Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada created this online resource for the BC Government in 2016, which could serve as a launchpad for the development of a specific guide for Indigenous business and economic development corporations.

*Guidebook to Doing Business in Asia*

<https://www.investkelowna.com/application/files/2814/7795/5141/bc-sme-guidebookjune2016-2.pdf>

For more information please contact:

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## Indigenous – Asia Pacific Business Relations Roundtable

### DETAILED NOTES

February 13, 2019

Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

#900 - 675 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC

*Prepared by*

*Carrie Peacock, Raincoast Ventures Ltd.*

#### **Roundtable Highlights**

During the roundtable:

- Presentations were provided by representatives of Indigenous economic development organizations, on the following:
  - “The Taza Developments”, by Darrell Crowchild, Tsuut’ina
  - “The SRDL Business Group”, by Tom Many Heads, SRDL Business Group
  - “Musqueam Capital Corporation”, Stephen Lee, Musqueam Capital Corporation
  - “Nunatsiavut Group of Companies”, by Clint Davis, Acasta Capital
  - “Indigenous AP Business Relations Roundtable”, by Heather Bishop, Cold Lake First Nation
  - “Des Nedhe Development”, by Sean Willy, Des Nedhe Development
- Presentations were provided related to “Asia Pacific Trade Opportunities” by the following:
  - Stewart Beck, President and CEO, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada
  - Christian Hansen, Senior Trade Commissioner, Canadian Trade Commissioner Service
  - Rosie Niedermayer, Trade Commissioner, Canadian Trade Commissioner Service
  - Bryan Hughes, Export Development Canada
  - Xenia Wong, Bennett Jones
  - Matthew Coon Come, Grand Council of the Crees
  - Andy Chen, Director General, Taipei Economic and Culture Office Vancouver
  - Ruth Chang, Taiwan External Trade Council
- Next Steps / Key Takeaways:
  - Establishing relationships is critical for engaging in the Asian market
  - A consolidated co-op or alliance of First Nations organizations, would make it easier to access the Asian markets (or other markets); it is generally preferred to work with larger organizations
  - Support is available through the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, Trade Commissioners, Export Development Canada, the foreign representatives’ offices, and other trade-related associations
  - The Director General extended an invitation for a delegation of Indigenous business leaders to participate in a (funded) trade mission to Taiwan, which the APF agreed to assist in coordinating

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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## 1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

### 1.1 Bonnie Leask, Creative Fire

Ms. Leask welcomed participants to the roundtable at 9:00 a.m., introduced herself and her colleague Jason Aebig, and acknowledged the traditional lands on which the roundtable was being held. She extended appreciation to Sean Willy and others for their contributions to the coordination of the roundtable, and to key economic development leaders for their keen interest in attending.

### 1.2 Sean Willy, CEO, Des Nedhe Development

Mr. Willy welcomed delegates and recalled past decisions to move towards creating own source revenue (OSR) opportunities. He acknowledged the opportunity to engage with the Asia Pacific Foundation (APF), noting that efforts were being made to look at opportunities to build on access to resources (i.e. oil, gas), and to discuss nation-to-nation partnerships. He noted the importance of discussing how to start working together, going forward.

### 1.3 Stewart Beck, President and CEO, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

Mr. Beck reviewed his past experience in economic development strategies with First Nations, including the Rama Casino. He reviewed predictions that Asia could represent 66% of the global middle class by 2030, and recognized benefits of seeking a bridge between First Nations and Asian economies.

He reviewed his past experience in Taiwan, where there was a significant Indigenous population. In the late 1990s, the Ambassador to China saw opportunities to connect with Indigenous communities in Taiwan. The President of Taiwan formally apologized for the mistreatment of Indigenous people and proceeded towards reconciliation. New Zealand's economy included a significant Maori presence.

Mr. Beck noted that he looked forward to the roundtable's discussion and the later reception with representatives of the roundtable's sponsors: LNG Canada, Teck, Port of Vancouver, Mosaic Forest Management, SFU, CP and Air Canada.

Attendees participated in a round of self-introductions.

## 2. Indigenous Investment and Marketing Opportunities

Ms. Leask welcomed delegates to consider the following questions, while listening to the prepared presentations from Indigenous leaders:

- Where are the opportunities for potential Asian investment, business or trade?
- How could the Asia Pacific Foundation and others best support you in these efforts?

### 2.1 Darrell Crowchild, Tsuut'ina

Mr. Crowchild reviewed an overhead presentation titled "Taza and the Southwest Ring Road, Together at Tsuut'ina", and the following:

- The definition of "Taza" means an "expression of amazement" or "something great is about

## DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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- to happen”
- The Taza development is a joint venture between the Tsuut’ina Nation and Canderel
  - The size of the development is estimated at 1,200 acres (\$4.5 billion real estate value)
  - The Tsuut’ina Trail (“The Calgary Ring Road”):
    - Alberta initially wanted to build a road through the nation, which was not supported
    - Michael Clark was Lead Counsel in negotiating the Ring Road deal
    - The west leg of the Ring Road will likely complete by 2024
    - Access points to the First Nation were built into the ring road agreement
  - The agreement with Alberta transportation affirms Alberta will build and maintain the roads
  - A development south of the casino is currently being negotiated
  - Alberta will soon be confirming timing for completion of the access points; this is critical to the developments
  - A major tenant for the industrial park will soon be announced; the industrial park is intending to open by November 2019, although the ring road will not yet be complete
  - A master service agreement has been achieved with the City of Calgary to provide water etc.
  - The completed roads will transfer back to the First Nation
  - Taxes collected will pay for servicing
  - Discussions are ensuing with 150 tenants throughout all three Taza developments
  - Key milestones include: adoption of the land use plan in December 2017; completion of Phase 1 (infrastructure) in Q4 2018; completion of Phase 1 (vertical construction) in Q2 2019; a tenants open in Q3 2020
  - With the Ring Road the community will be about 36 minutes to the Calgary Airport
  - There are three areas of the Taza development: Taza Park, Taza Crossing and Taza Exchange
  - Taza Park:
    - A 530-acre parcel located on Glenmore Trail; the Ring Road bisects Taza Park into two parcels
    - Access from the Ring Road to Taza Park was critical; access is provided by three interchanges
    - Land uses at Taza Park include: entertainment, shopping, etc.
    - Tenants for the Eagle Landing portion of Taza Park are being finalized
    - Green space throughout the Eagle Landing development was critical
  - Taza Crossing:
    - A 360-acre development to the south of the Glenmore Reservoir
    - Alberta will construct/maintain the road into Taza Crossing; the first layer of asphalt has been laid
    - Access is provided by an interchange on the Ring Road
    - The intent is that Taza Crossing will be a hub of “health, wellness and innovation”
    - Land uses in Taza Crossing include: innovation, technology, health care, recreation, multi-unit residential, etc.
  - Taza Exchange:
    - A 390-acre area located near the existing Tsuut’ina Nation facilities
    - This section accommodates the administration building, the Tsuut’ina police station, and the new Sportsplex
    - The old Sportsplex was in the middle of the Ring Road location; Alberta provided funding to build a new facility which opens soon; it includes ice rinks, an outdoor facility, and other elements

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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- Land uses for this section include: retail, shopping, entertainment, hotel, etc.
- The land was previously occupied by the Buffalo Run Golf Course
- “The Shops at Buffalo Run” will be constructed in the middle of Taza Exchange; tenants for this shopping mall will soon be announced
- A large organization will be accommodated in this section (to be announced soon).

## ***Discussion:***

The following questions/comments (Q/C) were offered by roundtable participants, and responses (R) were provided by the presenter:

Q/C: Who did the planning for this project?

R: Tsuut’ina Nation entered into a partnership arrangement with Canderel Development. Representatives of the Tsuut’ina Nation Council and Canderel participate on the Board of Directors for the project. Experts are brought in as needed.

Q/C: What portion of those involved in doing design work are First Nations representatives?

R: There are only a few First Nations people involved in the design work. Other teams are focused on seeking opportunities and the community plan.

Q/C: What are the biggest challenges that have occurred with this project?

R: Some of our biggest challenges have been working with government. The Department of Justice Canada is focused on protecting the Crown. The project’s team remains focused on the project’s objectives.

Q/C: Many First Nations are getting involved in urban investment. We have 150 acres south of Saskatoon, which we are moving forward with, on a smaller scale.

Q/C: How open are you to outside investors?

R: We are open to all investments. We are finalizing a syndicate which seeks to raise \$280 million. We are determining who will be taking the lead on this. We are open to looking at leasing land, investments, etc. A few First Nations have asked about investment opportunities.

Q/C: What are the challenges related to seeking out Asian investments in Canada?

Q/C: If you are looking at a green field investment, you are competing with others. Any investor will need to consider the tax environment, land costs, access to labour, etc. Commodity space is critical.

Access to natural resources is important. How much latitude do you have and how can you package it? This project could become an attractive investment, given its proximity to Calgary. Fujitsu is looking at Vancouver as they would have access to AI resources. Immigration programming needs to allow us to bring in skilled staff. Setting up a vocational

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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institution that would focus on technology skills, would be attractive to investors.

R: We have had a few workshops. There are a lot of concepts (i.e. education, technology) – Taza Crossing will be the last piece of the project to be developed.

## 2.2 Tom Many Heads, President and CEO, SRDL Business Group

Mr. Many Heads reviewed an overhead presentation titled “SRDL Business Group – A Siksika Nation Company”, and noted that:

- During the last 25 or 30 years, Siksika was focused on natural gas and oil production
- The dropped gas and oil prices and production led to the market crashing
- SRDL has become involved in other entities
- SRDL recognized the need to diversify its business development agenda, which prompted consideration on some external opportunities
- Investments have been pursued closer to urban metropolitan centers
- The SRDL’s core business is related to: agriculture, energy, construction, retail, hospital and investment/future growth
- Agribusiness has been critical to Siksika; there is potential for expansion in irrigation; Siksika has an abundant water supply, which Siksika only accesses a fraction of
- The Siksika Energy Resource Corporation was established in 1995; Siksika is getting out of the oil business, but not the energy business
- With Blackfoot Aggregate, Siksika has some of the most prolific gravel sources in Alberta
- In 2011/12 Siksika recognized that a pipeline would be constructed; as construction growth in southern Alberta was anticipated, an agreement was formed with Graham Construction to help build projects, including a retail business place
- Siksika took on construction contracts through Niitsitapi-Graham LP (NGLP) – with the intent to help with mitigating before a flood
- Siksika sought to provide services and sustainable business to the community, and included a Petro Canada, Subway, grocery store, WIFI services, and a business centre
- Recent hospitality investments have been secure
- Siksika Holdings has seven hotel and conference properties covering distinct market sectors in Alberta and BC; viable partnerships in the hotel sector and brand name entities were pursued; Siksika partnered with a group in BC – PHI Hotel Group, and invested in two hotels in Calgary:
  - The Calgary Westin at the Calgary Airport, opened January 2019 on federal crown land and Calgary Airport Authority Lands in the NW portion of Deerfoot North Calgary International Airport Trade park
- Siksika partnered with the same entity to open “Edmonton West” a dual property with “Element by Westin” and “Four Points by Sheraton”
- Discussions on other opportunities have ensued:
  - In addition to developing properties in Calgary and Edmonton with PAL Hospitality, the SRDL engaged with the Pomeroy Group on projects in Ft. St. John, Kelowna, Kananaskis, and Prince George
  - The Kanaskis Mountain Lodge is a world-class resort
  - Investment and future growth opportunities include, “Siksika Herbz Ltd.” a 24,000 square foot cannabis production facility, in the Siksika Industrial Park, approximately one hour

## DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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east from the community in partnership with a BC organization (anticipated to open in late 2020)

- Regarding agri-business opportunities, the Stage 2 Irrigation Expansion Plan is projected to irrigate an additional 6,000 acres in the Shouldice, Arrowwood and West Axe Flats areas
- Siksika has a combined asset value of \$140 million; the Business Group employs 101 employees.

***Discussion:***

The following questions/comments (Q/C) were offered by roundtable participants, and responses (R) were provided by the presenter:

Q/C: How could APF support your efforts?

R: We have strengths and assets, including a massive land base. We are situated one hour from Calgary. A challenge has been accessing markets. Siksika welcomes the opportunity to make direct contacts with Asian partners, and is looking at future potential investments. We want to entertain a long term growth strategy.

### 2.3 Stephen Lee, CEO, Musqueam Capital Corporation (MCC)

Mr. Lee reviewed an overhead presentation titled, “Musqueam Capital Corporation” and reported that:

- When he started working with Musqueam, they were recently out of receivership/remedial management
- With community and leadership’s support, the MCC was formed as the asset management arm of the Musqueam Nation
- The MCC’s Board of Directors reports to Chief and Council and is responsible to Musqueam members
- The MCC’s goal was to separate business from politics; significant collaboration and communication with the community is critical
- The land base is small – Musqueam is in the City of Vancouver, therefore land value is high
- Musqueam has off-reserve assets and conducts business seamlessly with the Cities of Vancouver, Burnaby, Delta, Richmond and others
- Musqueam has three pieces of expensive land – the Musqueam Golf and Learning Academy (on reserve), the University Golf Course (150 acres on University Endowment Lands), and Shaughnessy Golf Course (a private membership club, under lease in Shaughnessy)
- The Milltown Marina on the Fraser River is situated between Richmond and Vancouver, and was established through a long term lease agreement with the Port of Vancouver; there are tenants at the marina including a pub, brokerage firm, and marine repair/maintenance facility
- Other properties under management include: “Shalimar” a 76-unit residential property (on reserve)
- The Fraser Arms site (on Marine Drive) was acquired in 1993 by Musqueam
- A 22-acre development on the University Endowment Lands, across from the University Golf Course, took a few years to rezone and have incorporated green space and walkable areas; this is separate from the City of Vancouver
- Lelem Village (marketed as a “Master Planned Community at UBC Pacific Spirit Park”):

## DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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- “Lelem” translates to “Home”
- The project includes mixed use and a retail plaza to be anchored by a major grocery, restaurants, and rental and market residential units
- The project will be built in two phases over a ten year timeline; for the first phase, the First Nation partnered with Polygon
- Musqueam can lease the lands long-term (99 year leases); the key is that Musqueam will retain ownership of the property
- The Lelem Community Centre and Day Care is a 15,000 square foot project
- A lot of old growth trees were retained and incorporated in features of the development; timber taken from the community was repurposed in the Musqueam community
- An adventure park/playground was included for the “young and young at heart”
- There may be just under 200 acres of lands, valued at billions of dollars
- Musqueam is nearing ownership of 800 acres of lands (including industrial, residential, mixed-use, office and reserve lands)
- A pipeline of 30-40 years of strategic development has already been mapped out
- The focus has been to partner with other First Nations to leverage a position to acquire lands back; synergies have been created by transitioning accommodation into equity
- Musqueam has materialized a large portfolio that will continue to monetize to create wealth for future generations; a wealth fund may be created for community members
- Musqueam has leveraged some strong partnerships and has worked with local long-term development partners.

***Discussion:***

The following questions/comments (Q/C) were offered by roundtable participants, and responses (R) were provided by the presenter:

Q/C: What have you done to insulate business from politics?

R: The Board of Directors is made up of nine directors, of which five are Musqueam members (three from Council, two from community) plus some external business representatives. A “Business Charter” governs the relationships between the MCC and government, and separates extraordinary decisions, and limits and restricts what we can do.

Q/C: Does the MCC get involved with projects?

R: An Asset Management Agreement lays out which assets the MCC is involved in. MCC representatives may be invited to sit in on some discussions, related to various business opportunities.

### 2.4 Clint Davis, Partner and Managing Director, Acasta Capital

Mr. Davis reviewed an overhead presentation titled, “Nunatsiavut Group of Companies”, and noted that:

- The Nunatsiavut Group of Companies is one of six Inuit development companies across the country
- Less than 4% of Canadians have been to the north (mostly for work)
- There are three development corporations in Nunavut (representing each of the three

## DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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- different regions)
- The Nunatsiavut Group of Companies owns a helicopter company (solely Inuit-owned), which serves the north and the homeland; opportunities to collaborate with the other development corporations in the north have been pursued
- A trade association sought a unified voice for Inuit business, to enable opportunities to bid on some large scale opportunities (i.e. residential facilities for people travelling to the north)
- A land claim was settled in 2005 (for five communities), which was the last Inuit land claim to be settled in Canada
- Most Inuit communities rely on diesel; many do not have road access; those who do have roads, are often inaccessible during the winter months
- The Nunatsiavut Group of Companies is based out of Newfoundland/Labrador
- An impact agreement has been negotiated with a copper mine
- To separate business and politics, a trust was established, which is the sole shareholder of the development corporation
- There are procurement opportunities with the Government of Newfoundland/Labrador; land claim management is governed by the Nunatsiavut government
- The Board of Directors is comprised of government officials and three independent Directors; the Board cannot intervene in daily operations; it would be helpful if they came out and supported
- The vision of the organization is to be an Inuit-led business leader in the north; the goal is to produce annual reports that demonstrate that Nunasiavut is open for business
- Nunasiavut owns a number of companies (solely and partially)
- A “Corporate Social Responsibility” policy was designed to govern how to support the community
- There are 11 operating companies and joint ventures with major organizations including: Kiewit, Bird Construction and others
- Nunatsiavut is keenly open to discussions on operations

### ***Discussion:***

The following questions/comments (Q/C) were offered by roundtable participants, and responses (R) were provided by the presenter:

Q/C: Have you pursued discussions with circumpolar and arctic connections?

R: The Arctic Indigenous Investment Conference 2019 is scheduled February 12-14, 2019 in Whitehorse. There are a number of different entities in the Arctic Secretariat – some are driven by non-polar countries while others are driven by other interests.

A few years ago, we came together at the table. We have not met with other business investors from elsewhere in terms of an approach to the arctic. There will likely be new transportation routes and greater access to resources. Russia is trying to assert its sovereignty over the region.

We think there will be a critical role for our development corporations to play – we could provide insight. If there is some opening up to the arctic, how can we ensure our communities, cultures and environments are respected? We are trying to coordinate a trade mission to Greenland. They want to seek capitalism opportunities with Canada. We

## DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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have met with the Danish Consulate and are seeking to visit in May or June 2019.

Q/C: Do you do any fisheries business in Asia?

R: We were trying to get our fish products sold in Canada, but they are being sold to Asia. We just purchased helicopter companies in BC and in California. It is important to look at the far north – it is a remarkable opportunity for the country. Other countries recognize its value, as a strategic asset.

Q/C: It would be helpful to have a better understanding of how the APF works.

R: The APF can help you frame your thinking in how you can succeed in Asia. There are some common themes, but we will look at this as an exercise. Collaboration is critical – when First Nations go to different markets they do not have the same impact as if they collaborated into one group, representing a large group of First Nations.

Consider how to come up with a common script that reflects a larger group, with multiple assets and resources.

The process in Canada is complicated. Take what you are doing here, bring together a common theme, and project it when you go abroad, to make it easier for the APF to work with you. You need a larger image. The biggest companies in India will not want to deal with small entities. They prefer to deal with an entity with significant combined assets.

### 2.5 Heather Bishop, Director, Cold Lake First Nation (CLFN)

Ms. Bishop reviewed an overhead presentation titled, “Indigenous AP Business Relations Roundtable – Cold Lake First Nation” and reported that:

- Cold Lake First Nation:
  - Is in Treaty 6 in NE Alberta
  - Has traditional territory extending into Saskatchewan
  - Has approximately 2,800 members and four different reserve parcels in close proximity, near the City of Cold Lake
- The “Cold Lake Air Weapons Range”:
  - Was developed in the 1950s without dialogue with First Nations
  - Many First Nations people were displaced when government made the decision to establish the range; ammunition testing still occurs on site
  - Citizens were relocated to the south, to practice agriculture on the edge of the Boreal Forest; there were catastrophic impacts on First Nations
- The Cold Lake First Nations’ land claim was settled with federal government in 2001
- Charts titled “Cold Lake First Nations, Changes in the Circle of Livelihood” indicated a typical annual circular calendar, in three phases: pre-1952, 1952-present and future
- The CLFN did not have a specific economic development arm, but was developing a business trust
- The “Primco Dene Group of Companies” includes over 20 companies; many community members have had their own independent businesses for some time
- CLFN is at the south end of the oil sands development, which is where most of the industrial activity is derived; efforts are being made by many First Nations to diversify away from oil and

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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- gas
- Most of the economy in Alberta is based on oil prices
  - The Alberta Energy Corporation provided a \$100,000 loan to the CLFN, to establish a construction company, which has subsequently evolved and expanded
  - The City of Cold Lake has approximately 10,000 residents, including residents at the weapons range
  - The CLFN regained access to the weapons range lands, through a settlement agreement
  - Government may be seeking to get weapons ranges off of lands suited to energy production
  - CLFN owns and operates: Casino Dene, a Courtyard Marriott Hotel, and companies focused on the environment, insurance, cement, etc.
  - There are significant opportunities in the Boreal Forest
  - Partnerships are in place with forestry companies keen to work with First Nations in Saskatchewan
  - CLFN is proud to have an 80% Indigenous employment rate
  - Formal partnerships have been established with some First Nations across Canada
  - Initiatives include: the business trust and governance structure; reserve lands planning, comprehensive community planning, economic development strategic plan, partnerships with other Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities (government, industry, businesses, etc.); research and grant opportunities
  - Opportunities to promote tourism have been considered (i.e. The Alex Janvier Gallery)
  - Efforts are being made to diversify with opportunities from the conventional oil/gas industry
  - CLFN is struggling with how to leverage finances, investments and trust.

## 2.6 Sean Willy, CEO, Des Nedhe Development

Mr. Willy reviewed a distributed brochure on “Des Nedhe Development” and explained that:

- Des Nedhe has approximately 1,200 band members
- 30 years ago, Des Nedhe became involved in the uranium industry, and is now the second largest uranium producer (second to Kazakhstan)
- In the mid-1990s Des Nedhe purchased land situated to the south of Saskatoon
- Des Nedhe Development:
  - The Elders and community leaders created Tri-Con North, which is now “Tron Construction and Mining”, a 100% First Nations owned company
  - Des Nedhe also owns a partnership with Tyson Mining
  - Efforts were being made to evolve towards modern joint-venture agreements
  - Des Nedhe appreciates the partnerships and the employment they created
  - A “Freshwater Fish” Crown corporation is being pursued, to re-invigorate industry
- Des Nedhe projects:
  - The Grasswood Urban Reserve has a successful tobacco business
  - Beauval has established a prosperous arrangement with Loblaws
  - Des Nedhe purchased a welding fabrication business
  - Creative Fire is a communications firm that can assist First Nations companies in telling their stories
  - A setback experienced at the community level were impact benefit agreements (IBAs), etc.
- Des Nedhe hires more Indigenous people than non-Indigenous people
- Efforts have been made to support for organizations seeking to employ First Nations people

## DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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- Federal government spends \$12 billion on services each year but they only use Indigenous suppliers .5% of the time
- Des Nedhe has a 30-year history and strives to hire good people
- Community members believe economic development leads to self-determination
- It is important to work towards tying the Asian market to opportunities.

***Discussion:***

The following questions/comments (Q/C) were offered by roundtable participants, and responses (R) were provided by the presenter:

Q/C: There are differences between First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments and communities. We partner with Innu for convenience.

R: Is “patient money” a real thing in the Asian market? We have 53 acres of land left to purchase in Saskatchewan.

Q/C: Are you seeing any movement with federal government?

R: Yes. There have been some internal mandates. We are working towards a better value proposition and the best quality of bids.

Q/C: The APF is involved with some work exchange programs in Asia. Consider what can be done to engage students and ensure they are “Asia-ready”. Can we share some already-developed curriculum?

Q/C: At a recent panel focused on diversification of the economy, someone questioned how to develop a technology hub in Calgary. A lack of talent has been identified as the biggest limiter.

Q/C: Calgary may attract some technology talent, where the cost-of-living is less than in Vancouver.

Q/C: Capacity is a key struggle. There have been a record numbers of Indigenous people graduating from law school, which we struggle to see translated into the workforce.

Q/C: The number of students coming from India has declined since 2010. Consider working with educational institutions. First Nations organizations could provide infrastructure and/or the skill to help diversify in traditional areas. In Ontario, 60% of students going to vocational institutions have a university degree. People need jobs. There is value to having a university degree in addition to a vocational skill.

Q/C: Many Indigenous people are pursuing roles in social sciences. We need to strive to be an “employer of choice”. A goal of the TD Bank has been to hire as many Indigenous people as possible. Organizations could attract talent by offering appealing approaches to lifestyle and work-life balance.

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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Q/C: Migration to urban centres is occurring everywhere. Where there is population growth, there are social, education and other issues.

## 3. Overview of Trade Opportunities

### 3.1 Stewart Beck, President and CEO, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

Mr. Beck explained that prior to joining the APF, he served as the Canadian High Commissioner to the Republic of India. He joined Canada's Department of External Affairs and International Trade (now Global Affairs Canada) in 1982 and served abroad in the United States, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China. In Ottawa, he held a number of positions, including Director General of the North Asia Bureau, Director General Responsible for Senior Management and Rotational Assignments, and Assistant Deputy Minister for International Business Development, Investment, and Innovation. He was Consul General in Shanghai and prior to his posting to India, he was Consul General in San Francisco.

He further acknowledged that:

- Saskatchewan was the largest exporting province to India (i.e. potash, pulp, etc.)
- Diamonds from the NWT passed through Antwerp and were cut in India
- A number of commodities are not being statistically credited to Canada (i.e. gold, engines, etc.)
- Asia is a growing region; abilities to export to Asian markets need to be considered
- A lot of agricultural products were sold in Asia, based on stringent Canadian standards
- “Transitioning from one meal of dahl per day to two, has a significant impact on the economy”
- India has two of the largest refineries in the world; they would welcome oil sands crude from Alberta, as it generates more products they could market
- Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission signed an agreement with an Indian organization, but it could not proceed due to access issues
- The gravity of oil from California is the same as from the oil sands; their refineries are geared for this
- It is important to consider the demographics; the median age in Asia is 30.7 years; there is an aging demographic in China, meaning that health care is critical; the APF website shows Statistics Canada information on products Canada ships to Asia
- In 2014 we held 1.39% of the import market share; in the preceding years, the economy expanded but Canada's market share did not increase at the same pace
- It is fundamental to diversify trade away from the US; it takes patience and time to do business in Asia
- Consideration could be given to creating a co-op around fresh-water fish, to be sold through an e-commerce forum in Asia
- Direct flights currently move lobster from Halifax to China
- Quality product is more important than price in China
- It is critical to:
  - Consider your assets, and then create a larger projection
  - Work together as a group rather than as individual First Nations
  - Consider establishing an economic development co-op of a group of First Nations
  - Work with people that know and understand how to do business in the Asian markets

## DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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- Determine what products you can provide
- Payment is a critical issue to consider; how you sell into a super market is different from how you sell to an e-commerce platform
- Decide on a strategic approach to a market, then scale it to others, based on your success
- APF collaborated with a company that works with JD.com and Alibaba.com
- Specialized cuts of beef from an Ontario packer are sold in Asia; although meat packers in Alberta also wanted to ship beef, the Ontario seller provided cuts the Asian market wanted, on e-commerce platforms; his sales have grown exponentially
- Hong Kong or Taiwan could provide an opportunity to work a model out first; then look to China.

### ***Discussion:***

The following questions/comments (Q/C) were offered by roundtable participants, and responses (R) were provided by the presenter:

Q/C: Could the collective be a corporate entity comprised of multiple First Nations?

R: Yes. The corporation could introduce itself as “an \$X million cooperative that provides ? products”. Consolidators do this – First Nations need to be their own consolidator. They could sell products including fish, seafood products, etc. Consider what value can you add to products that can be branded in a certain way. In China, Canadian food products are considered high quality, particularly if certified under a quality standard. We have prepared three papers on e-commerce, which are accessible on the APF website. They offer examples of how to sell into the market. It is important to work together.

Q/C: I have seen instances where organizations, begin to partner with others (through an agreement), before selling into the Asian market. It is about scaling, size and having a presence.

R: If you bring your resources together, your marketing budget is larger. If you decide to pursue the market in China – identify who to work with, based on the products you decide to sell.

Q/C: First Nations organizations may tend to look inwards.

Q/C: Consider a neutral agreement to state “We are selling seafood to Vietnam” - then invite others to participate.

Q/C: There is nothing you cannot buy online in Asia.

R: You can sell a tourism package online. Many of the packages sold in China, are directed to healthy and fit millennials, who are keen to travel north. You will need to adapt your marketing approach accordingly. Seeing the Northern Lights is a big deal for many people in Taiwan.

Q/C: Many people in Asia do not know a lot about Canada.

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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R: Given the average income of people in China, a \$10,000 tour package to Saskatchewan may not be significant. It is important to consider the market.

Q/C: What are some of the considerations when selecting the first “point of entry”, aside from whether or not there is a market for a product?

R: There are overlaps between “investing” and “selling a product”. Start in Hong Kong or Taiwan – they are easier markets, where you can do business in English. Legal structures are also similar.

Q/C: What about “niche to scale”?

R: One of our Directors talks about a “protein super-cluster” opportunities in Asia. In Canada we may think the market for a specific pea would be small, however, they are sold exclusively to China, where they grind it into a flour for noodles. A farmer has indicated that 50% of his blueberry crop is sold in advance to China. These are niche markets in a North American context. You could sell fresh fish on an e-commerce platform in China.

## 3.2 Christian Hansen, Senior Trade Commissioner, Canadian Trade Commissioner Service

Mr. Hansen confirmed that he had been proud to serve Canada in Japan, Norway etc. and further explained that:

- Trade Commissioners were an under-utilized resource
- There are 1,000 Trade Commissioners in cities around the world; they do not charge for helping clients do international business
- “International business” could include seeking international investments, exporting goods or services, or helping a client invest abroad
- Trade Commissioners provide advice; more than half of the Trade Commissioner Service’s clients are not Canadian; we hire people with experience in various industry sectors
- We encourage clients to use Trade Commissioners for contacts
- The Trade Commissioner Service offers advice, contacts and funding
- The Honourable Jim Carr, Minister of International Trade Diversification:
  - Speaks highly of diversifying amongst the export community
  - Supports underrepresented groups, including Indigenous businesses
- Trade Commissioners can help Indigenous economic development from an international perspective
- An ideal client, that will do well in Asia:
  - Is 5-7 years old
  - Has 20 employees
  - Has previously exported to the US
- When your Trade Commissioner knows your business model, we can help to look at international opportunities, and the existing network
- Federal government’s “CanExport Program”<sup>1</sup>:
  - A risk-sharing program – which could pay 50% of the costs associated with visiting a market to generate business

<sup>1</sup> For information on CanExport visit: <https://international.gc.ca/trade-commerce/funding-financement/canexport/index.aspx?lang=eng>

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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- For example, if you go to Germany, the program could cover half the costs associated with attending; this supports new markets and new opportunities
- The program is well-funded; it would be helpful to discuss how the program can help explore new markets
- The “Invest in Canada” Program<sup>2</sup>:
  - Could share 50% of costs associated with promotional materials and other associated expenses
  - Can help promote opportunities; we also spend time considering the best way to approach a market and risks to be assumed when travelling to China
- The Trade Commissioner’s office can provide general information on various considerations when contemplating doing business in China
- Some clients entered into arrangements that did not turn out as anticipated
- There is an approach to “negotiate, reach an agreement, do business”
- If you are doing business in Asia, contact our High Commission or Embassy office to find out more about contacts
- There are challenges in protecting intellectual property when exporting to China
- It is important to understand free trade agreements and how they apply when doing business in Asia; the tariffs on wood and fish have come down; if your margin is between 5-8% - this just doubled
- If you have never exported before, look at the “Export Navigator Program<sup>3</sup>”
- The International Inter-Tribal Trade and Investment Organization<sup>4</sup> (chaired by Wayne Garnons-Williams) has been engaging American Indian tribes; some have enhanced their communities through casino revenues and might welcome the opportunity to purchase food from First Nations in Canada for their restaurants
- The International Indigenous Trade Mission and Conference<sup>5</sup> is held twice a year (the next is scheduled June 2-4, 2019 in Oklahoma)
- The next World Indigenous Business Forum<sup>6</sup> is scheduled October 8-10, 2019 in Vancouver.

### 3.3 Rosi Niedermayer, Trade Commissioner, Canadian Trade Commissioner Service

Ms. Niedermayer acknowledged benefits of First Nations working as a conglomerate rather than working independently, and further noted that:

- There are many opportunities for exporting product to Asia
- Trade Commissioners frequently receive requests for qualified buyers in Asia
- Whatever you want to sell – approach a Trade Commissioner for help in facilitating the right connections.

#### ***Discussion:***

The following questions/comments (Q/C) were offered by roundtable participants, and responses (R) were provided by the presenter:

Q/C: We talked earlier about investments. For some projects, we are seeking investments. Would the Trade Commissioners office be able to assist us in tracking capital for specific

<sup>2</sup> For information on the Invest in Canada program, visit: <https://www.investcanada.ca>

<sup>3</sup> For information on the Export Navigator Program, visit: <https://smallbusinessbc.ca/export-navigator/>

<sup>4</sup> For information on the IITO, visit: <https://iitio.org/about-iitio/>

<sup>5</sup> For information on the IITM&C, visit: <https://iitio.org>

<sup>6</sup> For information on the WIBF, visit: <http://wibf.ca>

## DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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opportunities?

- R: Contact the Trade Commissioner's office, to discuss opportunities. It would be helpful if you can provide a business plan and information on: the capital you are seeking, what the opportunity is, and what the time frame is.
- Q/C: Would the "Invest in Canada" program help consider these opportunities?
- R: Government put money into a "department corporation" – an investment promotional agency designed to look at premier investors and large projects.
- Q/C: Ian Gerard McKay was appointed CEO of "Invest in Canada". The office provides a concierge service and will work with someone wanting to invest. Connection(s) could be made particularly if the project was an energy-driven project, which requires discussion with investors in Japan, etc. There are different ways in which to make people aware of opportunities. Currently the investment environment is plagued by issues related to competition, taxation, regulatory environments, etc.
- R: The Japanese government's office for North America looks at energy and mining opportunities for investment.
- Q/C: Are there studies that provide an inventory of resources that are conducive for an Asian market?
- R: I am not aware of a comprehensive overview. In BC, I see a transfer of wealth in terms of resource rights and extracted capacity to Indigenous communities. I want to play a constructive role with respect to accessing foreign capital. It is important to build capacity.
- Q/C: When looking at potential investments in Canada, particularly in the far north where there are some profound gaps, would geography be a barrier to investment?
- R: In my experience with potential foreign investors, the bottom line is the bottom line. It is about making money.
- Q/C: There was a significant investment made to enable a steel company in Quebec to sell to clients in the UK. There is capacity to analyze product locally.
- Q/C: How many clients would a Trade Commissioner typically work with at the same time?
- R: There are 17 Trade Commissioners in the Pacific Region – each has 30-50 clients, depending on the sector. The consumer products specialist likely has more clients.
- Q/C: There are a lot of businesses and entities competing. The better defined an opportunity is, the easier it is for the Trade Commissioners to assist.

## DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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Q/C: Consider collaborating as a consortium. Bring together a group. A fund could be created for a specific opportunity. Are there other similar consortiums?

R: I am not seeing this. It would be easier to service that type of organization.

Q/C: A consortium (led by Terry Matthews) included six or seven technology companies, to be represented in India. The concept was unique.

R: There is a group that brings together First Nations' interests in mining, to China.

Q/C: In China, 68% of the energy is generated through coal plants. As they transition to reduce the use of coal, they are moving towards using gas. There was previously an agreement to take 100,000 barrels to India – the agreement could not proceed due to access issues. Energy in Asia will continue to have a carbon dimension to it.

Q/C: Is it critical to have “boots on the ground” to complement the intel that a Trade Commissioner can bring?

R: The importance of having “boots on the ground” depends on the size of the deal, the relationship with the client, and other factors. It is difficult to generalize the right response.

Q/C: If you want to achieve long-term business – you need “boots on the ground”. For example, when Teck came to India – they recognized that steel was needed. Don Lindsay, the CEO of Teck, took his board and management team and spent two weeks in India travelling around, to better understand their infrastructure. Today they sell more to India than they do in China.

Another example is with McCain's. After seven years, McCain's now has two french-fry manufacturing facilities. McCain's prompted changes to the way potatoes are harvested. They now use drip irrigation on potato fields, which were previously flooded to harvest. McDonald's french-fry sales are significant in India.

### 3.4 Bryan Hughes, Export Development Canada (EDC)

Mr. Hughes introduced an overhead presentation titled “Take on the World”, and explained that:

- The EDC's mission was to help companies go, grow and succeed in markets across the world
- EDC has offices across Canada
- After working as an engineer in construction, he had an opportunity as a Trade Commissioner
- It is important to leverage Trade Commissioners; advance planning is beneficial
- He coordinated deals in Columbia, Mexico and other countries before working with the Trade Commissioners
- The international EDC offices are generally located in the office of the Trade Commissioners
- The EDC:
  - Focuses on proactively identifying who to do business with
  - Is engaged in business in 190 markets
  - Works to identify preferred businesses to work with, in the long term

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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- Insures transactions (approximately 2% - 3%)
- Ensures whether a client is credit-worthy or otherwise
- Arranges corporate guarantees (not personal guarantees)
- Partners with the five large banks and HSBC
- “Bonding Solutions” can be an impediment for First Nations organizations
- For companies doing business outside Canada, getting an assurity bond can be challenging; EDC does assurity bonds – for anywhere in the world
- If LNG needs an assurity bond, bid bond, or performance bond – communicate with the EDC; there may be some challenges, but EDC may be able to assist
- EDC can get a company an operating line, before a bank would be comfortable doing so
- Trade Commissioners will get you through “open doors”
- EDC offers webinars on doing business abroad.

## ***Discussion:***

The following questions/comments (Q/C) were offered by roundtable participants, and responses (R) were provided by the presenter):

Q/C: We worked with EDC for an acquisition outside of Canada, and would refer others to EDC.

Q/C: We are also working on a deal with EDC and would refer them.

## **3.5 Xenia Wong, Bennett Jones**

Ms. Wong reviewed her years of experience in Singapore and Hong Kong as an international lawyer, and explained that:

- Some of Asia’s legal structures are similar to Canada’s, but may be named differently
- Consideration is needed on whether you require an Indonesian partner before working in Indonesia
- Canada is generally under-represented in Asia
- It is important to take time to establish business relationships
- Networking and connections are critical in China; clients need to get to know you and trust you as a person before deals can be engaged
- The language of business in India is English
- In SE Asian markets, English is common law
- In Indonesia, rather than enforcing a legal agreement, dispute resolution is pursued
- Each country in Asia is different; it is critical to know what you are getting into in advance
- Hong Kong is an entry way to China; Singapore is a great market and a commercially minded entry-point
- “Face” is a big deal; it is critically important to not publicly embarrass or humiliate anyone; you cannot put someone in a situation where they cannot gracefully say “no”; you cannot demand an answer of them
- Chat apps are critical in Asia for doing business (i.e. “WhatsApp”, “WeChat”)
- In SE Asia, law firms tend to carve up Asia into NE and SE, separately from Japan; South Korea is beginning to open up
- Be available – spend time; they need to get to know you and like you as a person; once a relationship is established, there is a level of confidence and familiarity.

## DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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### ***Discussion:***

The following questions/comments (Q/C) were offered by roundtable participants, and responses (R) were provided by the presenter:

Q/C: In a current situation we are in with China, there is an issue of “face”; the issue has put Canada in a difficult place.

Q/C: What about legal considerations? How does an Indigenous organization prepare to enter into these markets?

R: It is about knowing the market you are going into. In International transactions, you can use English law. Secondarily, agreements may be pursued in local law. You need to know which law applies. English or New York Law likely applies when doing business in Asia.

Q/C: China has a civil law approach. India has a common law approach. If a decision is brought to a Judge, it will take a long time, as the court process is lengthy. A lot of business relationships are established in Singapore.

Q/C: We used to see Canadian companies coming in, setting up Indian businesses in Singapore.

Q/C: Is it important to seek legal counsel before entering into a new market?

R: It is important in many countries to have legal counsel in the country in which you are doing business. The choice of law for your agreements is important.

Q/C: You would need a lawyer. If we had a free trade agreement up for consideration, we would suggest using Canadian law and Canadian legal counsel.

Q/C: Japan should not be overlooked. They have a long standing trade relationship with BC. In preparing a package to present, know that the world is not “clamoring to come to Canada”. You are competing for attention. In China, you may not know what the yield is until the payment is received. Japan is sophisticated. Government agencies are under-utilized. Embassies and provincial offices should be considered. Embassies are looking at content; you could get the embassies to do a presentation. In Tokyo there is a 300-seat theatre that is a good venue. Accessing the Chamber of Commerce in the country is helpful.

Q/C: We worked with embassies in Ottawa and China. Their processes and structures were researched in advance.

Q/C: If there is any activity on Inuit-owned land, we issue them permits. We have protocol that applies.

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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## 3.6 Matthew Coon Come, Grand Council of the Crees

Dr. Coon Come, former Assembly of First Nations National Chief and former Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees, reviewed his background and experience and noted that:

- He was President of the region's government, with over 300,000 square kilometres of land
- Air Creebec connects a food distribution and other companies to the north
- Representatives of a Cree community travelled to China seeking potential investors in Shanghai
- He was currently a director of Goldcorp
- As National Chief his goal was to visit at least 400 of the 634 First Nations communities in Canada; many had achieved contracts or were seeking opportunities in other countries
- The windfarm SkyPower Global opened a number of opportunities in countries around the world
- A policy and protocol defines how a proponent can contact and build a relationship
- A number of First Nations are looking for partnerships and investment opportunities outside the country, in areas including natural resources, etc.

The Co-Facilitators referenced some common threads identified throughout the presentations:

- A consolidated co-op or entity would make it easier for First Nations organizations to penetrate the Asian markets (or other markets)
- Others may have attempted to do this through a joint venture or otherwise, in response to a specific opportunity
- It would make mobilization of an entity easier, if someone came up with opportunities that Indigenous companies could respond to.

### ***Discussion:***

The following questions/comments (Q/C) were offered by roundtable participants, and responses (R) were provided by the presenter:

Q/C: In terms of forming a corporate entity, ask around to find others who are interested in connecting.

Q/C: A significant balance sheet would be appealing from the other side. If we gathered a group at this meeting, as an economic alliance, we could work together. The CCA markets Canada as a group of municipalities. They talk about what they can do in terms of joint marketing and sales. We could call this group, the "Alliance of First Nations Economic Development Agencies". We could begin with an assessment of our assets.

R: Pulling something together before successfully entering these markets would be a significant undertaking?

Q/C: It would be a lot of work, but it is achievable. Consideration would be needed on identifying the correct market, etc.

Q/C: Entry through a south east Asian association could be considered.

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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Q/C: How do we determine market demand?

R: This is an area that Trade Commissioners can provide advice on, based on the value proposition.

Q/C: Consider agri-food products, resource development or otherwise. If you outline the alliance's assets, it becomes more powerful and easier to market.

## 3.7 **Andy Chen, Director General, Taipei Economic and Culture Office Vancouver**

Mr. Chen explained that the population of Taiwan was 23 million, on an island similar to the size of Vancouver Island. He added that:

- Taiwan is a democratic country
- The current President extended an apology to Taiwan's Indigenous people; more than 95% of the Taiwanese population originated from mainland China
- The map displayed, indicated immigration routes in Taiwan
- When you visit Indigenous people in Taiwan, there are similarities to some Indigenous people in Canada; a delegation to visit Taiwan would provide this opportunity
- Taiwan's technology is internationally renowned; 40 years ago, Taiwan only exported bananas and sugar cane – now 1/3 of Taiwan's GDP is from micro-chip technology
- He invited delegates to visit Taiwan and extended best wishes for the Lunar New Year.

## 3.8 **Ruth Chang, Taiwan External Trade Council**

Ms. Chang reviewed an overhead presentation on Taiwan's Global Competitiveness, and reported that:

- A world economic forum offered a "Global Competitiveness Report 2018" which compared Taiwan's economy in recent years
- Taiwan's foreign trade and economy valued development of local service industries, in addition to circular economy, green energy, biotechnology, national defense, smart machinery, new agriculture, and Asia's Silicon Valley
- Each year, the Taiwan External Trade Council hosts the "Taiwan Excellence Awards" which acknowledge excellence in research/development, quality, design and marketing
- Norco bikes, from the largest bicycle company in Canada, are manufactured in Taiwan
- Some of Taiwan's largest manufacturers are Acer, Giant, Asus, Transcend
- Taiwan accounts for a large market share of motherboards, notebooks, desk top computers, etc.
- There are 15 multi-national companies set up in global distribution centers in Taiwan
- It is convenient to fly from Taiwan to Hong Kong (1:40 hours), Shanghai (1:40 hours), etc.
- Taiwan has competitive advantages, including a strong presence in the Asian markets
- There are a number of trade shows held each year in Taiwan, including:
  - Food-related trade shows (i.e. "Food Tapei")
  - Medical/health related trade shows (i.e. "Medical Taiwan")
  - A "Fisheries and Seafood Show", September 26-28, 2019 at Kaohsiung Exhibition Centre
- The Taiwanese company "Blueseeds" assists local farmers in adopting natural farming to provide opportunities and to reduce exposure to chemicals; they recently opened an office in BC
- The Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) was established in 1970, with the

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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- intent to assist Taiwanese businesses in exporting their products; they brought delegates on international trade missions
- TAITRA is supported by government and various associations

Mr. Chen added that:

- You can find solutions from Taiwan; it is the centre of the Asia Pacific
- There are connections to Taiwanese business people who have been there for decades
- Canada is an “international brand name”, and is known for advanced technology (including AI)
- Taiwan has more than 160 City Mayors attending a conference in March in Taipei
- An Indigenous delegation from Canada to Taiwan can be arranged and should be considered

## ***Discussion:***

The following questions/comments (Q/C) were offered by roundtable participants, and responses (R) were provided by the presenter:

Q/C: Previously Canadian Airlines delivered lobsters from Canada to Taiwan. If a group of companies worked together, similar opportunities could be pursued.

Q/C: In 1995, Taiwan significantly improved its air quality.

Q/C: Consider when the Taiwan World Indigenous Forum in Taipei is scheduled.

A video was presented, prepared by the Taiwan Department of Foreign Trade.

## **Next Steps**

Mr. Beck referenced the Director General’s invitation to bring (and cover the costs related to) a delegation of a group of Indigenous business leaders to Taiwan:

- APF Canada could coordinate the mission, after the alliance was pulled together, and assets/narratives were defined
- About 20 years ago, Taiwan was a significant exporter of pork; their pork was eradicated following a breakout of hoof and mouth disease
- With the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) – the biggest market is Japan
- The pork market in Asia is only going to get bigger; Taiwan has huge market opportunities
- If you organize a mission to Taiwan - do something in the fall, when the weather is more pleasant; meanwhile, preparations can begin

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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## ***Discussion:***

The following questions/comments (Q/C) were offered by roundtable participants, and responses (R) were provided by the presenter:

Q/C: Clarification on when to engage a Diplomatic Office versus a Trade Commission Office?

R: Foreign representative offices in Canada can explain the business culture and economy in another country. Taiwan does a lot of trade shows. When you work with the foreign representative's office, their networks will be different from the Trade Commissioners connections. Wayfinding is important – you need to know sanitary regulations which they can help with, plus additional practical advice for travel visas.

R: There is a Canadian trade office in Taipei, with Trade Commissioners. The Alberta Government is the only province to have a trade representative office in Taiwan. Taiwan is not part of the CPTPP; it would be easier if it was. Taiwanese people can use their drivers licenses in all provinces of Canada, but not in the territories. People in Taiwan would gladly come to Canada to see the northern lights, but cannot drive in the territories. We invite government representatives to Taiwan, and welcome the opportunity to meet with business representatives.

## **Closing Comments**

Mr. Aebig welcomed feedback on the following questions, which prompted the subsequently indicated responses:

- What are your key take-aways from today?
  - We need to work together better, to add clout; if we pool our resources we can offer a broader array of services. Food and renewable energy, are two commodities that stand out.
  - If we are serious, we need to look at our respective portfolios. It will take time to collaborate, forge relationships and identify a strategy to move forward.
  - Relationships are critical. Some of the realities that Indigenous economic development organizations face in terms of the *Indian Act* and legislation, will need to be considered.
  - There are challenges to address at the community level. Something that appears to be a good initiative at face value, may present some unexpected challenges in a different market. It would be beneficial to capitalize on opportunities available.
  - Our structures are set up to give our partnership the ability to move forward without having to constantly check back. It may take the group time to come together, but there are opportunities to consider.
  - Are there any existing platforms in Canada where Indigenous organizations can come together at a national level?
  - Consider contacting the World Chambers Network (WCN)<sup>7</sup> for information and tools to support international e-Trade. The Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce (ACC)<sup>8</sup> in Manitoba is also a source of information. There may be other Indigenous business-to-business organizations that could be leveraged.

<sup>7</sup> For information on the WCN, visit: <http://www.worldchambers.com>

<sup>8</sup> For information on the ACC, visit: <https://www.aboriginalchamber.ca>

## DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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- A lot of good comments were offered on engaging in this market. Many First Nations have not initiated any economic development efforts. There may be 25 First Nations in Canada, that are active in economic development.
- A number of invited delegates were unable to attend this session, but expressed an interest in joining a future roundtable.
- What does this delegation need to remember coming out of today?
  - Focus on a particular project. I have had the most success in trade missions with Indigenous business, that were focused on something (i.e. agriculture)
  - Pursue early wins and small wins.
  - Do not go too big or too ambitious; look at something achievable in the next year
  - It is important for Indigenous economic development organizations to get to know each other; I anticipate five or six Indigenous businesses would be keen to participate in a coalition
  - There is a balance needed - stay small enough to manage but large enough to gain interest
  - Do not be intimidated; on a LNG trade mission in 2013 to Beijing, Seoul and Tokyo, people we met with were aware and informed about Prince George and Kitimat
  - Before venturing abroad, utilize resources available to assist you in getting there
  - Look towards an “Indigenous Team Canada”
  - Establish relationships; download chat apps; it only takes a few good contacts to connect with players in Asia.
  - In the 1980s, we pursued revenue-sharing opportunities. We looked at the coast of James Bay and partnered with representatives from Japan (Yamaha) to combine our Indigenous knowledge of the water, with their design technology to build larger canoes.
  - We learned a lot about fur-tanning organizations in Italy, but could not pursue this direction due to the creation of synthetic fur.
  - It is important to keep the business and political arms separate. The biggest challenge for Indigenous communities has been trying to find partners. It is important to be organized, have capital and gain experience by starting small.
  - Find quick and small ways to gain and maintain momentum. An Indigenous body is needed that focuses on global Indigenous trade relations. It is important to build relationships without being overwhelmed by the “bigness of the map on the wall”.

### Conclusion

Mr. Willy extended thanks to the APF for initiating the discussion. He recognized that although the priority of Indigenous economic development organizations was their own First Nations' communities, the conversation prompted further consideration.

Mr. Beck commended delegates for participating in the discussion and welcomed APF Canada's role as a catalyst to continue the discussion. It was further noted that:

- To form an alliance, a financial commitment could be required
- With a financial commitment (i.e. \$5,000-\$25,000) the right people could be involved to work towards developing a strategy to move forward with; as interest in the alliance grows, the price to participate could increase

## DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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- For example, “C100”<sup>9</sup> was established with a small financial investment by each of the original participants (a group of Canadian entrepreneurs and venture capital investors in Silicon Valley). The cost of membership subsequently increased. C100 is a non-profit, member-driven association of Canadian thought-leaders in the San Francisco Bay Area committed to supporting and accelerating the innovation economy in Canada
- Collaboration is critical to convey a larger image, in order to proceed into Asian markets. You need to spread the costs amongst more than one institution
- Education is fundamentally important. If you proceed to something like this, it would be helpful to pursue post-secondary education opportunities for First Nations people. Education would be a major contributor to the economy
- There is a coop program that encourages young Canadians to live and work in Asia. If there are First Nations youth interested in participating in the program, it could be beneficial for the alliance.

Mr. Beck confirmed that Mr. Teng had extended an invitation to the First Nations economic development representatives to participate in a mission to Taiwan. If there was interest in coordinating a delegation to Taiwan, efforts could proceed towards organizing a mission, potentially over the next six months.

Delegates were further encouraged to inform APF Canada if they wanted to attend the October 8-10, 2019 World Indigenous Business Forum in Vancouver, as a discussion with First Nations economic development organizations could be coordinated to coincide with the forum.

The February 13, 2019 Indigenous – Asia Pacific Business Relations Roundtable concluded at approximately 5:30 p.m.

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<sup>9</sup> For information on C100, visit: <https://www.thec100.org>

# DISCUSSION NOTES, CONTINUED

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## List of Attendees

*The following attended the February 13, 2019 Roundtable:*

Stewart Beck, President & CEO, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada  
Heather Bishop, Director, Cold Lake First Nation  
Rosie Bolderston, Development Manager, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada  
Michael Clark, Partner, MLT Aikens  
Darrell Crowchild, Councillor, Tsuut'ina Nation  
Matthew Coon Come, Grand Council of the Crees  
Clint Davis, Partner, Acasta Capital  
Jake Dockstator, Vice-President, Bridge Financing  
Christian Hansen, Director, Senior Trade Consul, Canadian Trade Commissioner Service  
Scott Harrison, Program Manager, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada  
Bryan Hughes, District Manager for British Columbia, Export Development Canada  
Serena Ko, Program Manager, Networks, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada  
Drew Lafond, Partner, MLT Aikens  
Catherine Lappe, Regional Director General, Indigenous Services Canada  
Stephen Lee, CEO, Musqueam Capital Corporation  
Vilupti Lok Barrineau, VP Operations & Networks, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada  
Tom Many Heads, CEO, Siksika Resource Development  
Rosi Niedermayer, Trade Commissioner, Canadian Trade Commissioner Service  
Jeff Reeves, VP Research, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada  
Victor Thomas, VP Prairie Region, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada  
Xenia Wong, Associate, Bennett Jones  
Sean Willy, CEO, Des Nedhe Development

### **Moderators:**

Jason Aebig, Creative Fire  
Bonnie Leask, Creative Fire

### **Notes prepared by:**

Carrie Peacock, Recording Secretary, Raincoast Ventures Ltd.